

profitable. They did not have enough interest. They did not have enough horses to operate. They had dates that were assigned to them by the Racing Commission. They only had a few horses that actually showed up. They had funds there last year that they could have actually used. They did not use them. Because if you'll look at what's happening to racetracks in other states, they are closing every year. The one up to Minneapolis is about to go bankrupt. The one in Des Moines did go bankrupt. They are not operating this year. They are just simulcasting. Nebraska is the only state in the whole United States that has five racetracks in one state, and we only have one and a half million people, and now you are thinking about opening up another form of racing with quarter horse racing. I cannot believe that the Small Track Fund is so important to quarter horses that it's going to drive the whole industry out of Nebraska when they didn't operate last year, but think about what we're doing to the racetracks that are operating. We currently have five race...have five racetracks in Nebraska and they are all losing money except Grand Island and they don't lose money because they get out first in the season. As our tracks are going down and down and down, now you want to come in and say, let's take part of their funds and help another racetrack. It makes more sense to me to use quarter horses on the same track as thoroughbreds than it does to come in and open up another racetrack. If you would open up a racetrack in Hastings, you would see what that would do to Grand Island. As I said, they're the only racetrack right now that's making any money, but if you put a racetrack 25 miles away they're going to lose money also. We're going to kill the industry. Now maybe you want to get rid of horse racing. If we don't approve an amendment like this and try to keep the tracks that we have solid so they can keep operating....This amendment is very important to Ak-Sar-Ben. In their current situation where they are going to be sold to Douglas County, this amendment is very important to them because it would put them on a status quo where they're at right now. It's not going to take away any more or pay any less. It's going to put them right where they're at right now. I think we need to get very serious about what is happening to racing in this state and this is an amendment that will help to maybe prolong it a few more years, but by not approving this amendment you're driving the current racetracks that are operating out of business a little bit sooner, so I urge you to approve this amendment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Schellpeper. Senator